



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 31 • August 8, 2008



IM Finance Committee Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The IM Finance Committee met Monday, August 4 at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ) in Helena. The committee reviewed the status of action items from the previous meeting and learned that Scott Bradford, PSSB, was able to come up with funding for the Montana National Guard Helena Armed Forces Reserve Center (HAFRC), Lost Creek and Belmont tower studies. A meeting is to be scheduled this month about the BNSF contract to explore long-range plans and associated costs. A meeting also took place with Dick Clark, and issues surrounding a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) were resolved. Finally, reimbursement form updates have been made and the form will be electronically distributed to IM participants.

Irene Bushnell, AZ, gave a summary of finances. Two contracts were approved to be transferred from the Dept. of Military Affairs to the IM Project: the Anderson ZurMuehlen and legal contracts. The Finance Committee also made a motion to recommend to the IMPD to continue with the HR consulting services of CMS. In addition, the committee passed a motion to request the SAA to ask the Dept. of Homeland Security for an extension of FY05 grant money through the end of 2009.

Action was taken on two Decision/Information Requests (DIRs), including an expenditure to pay for cable trays at the Divide site and a DIR instructing the SAA to issue an award letter to Roosevelt County to proceed with local procurement of a generator for Scout Hill. In another matter, the Montana Highway Patrol will be working with Golden Valley County to provide surplus radios to assist their fire department after the loss of its radio equipment to a fire.

Dan McGowan, DES, reported on FEMA Information Bulletin 271 about the NEPA process. He also indicated that the draft of the IM Project's Sub-Grantee Status will be reviewed at the upcoming work session. In addition, Dan reported that the Harris-Stratix and Motorola contract transfers to the IM are complete.

Larry Irwin, Montana Highway Patrol, reported that additional Statements of Work have been issued to perform frequency work in Billings and the Eastern Tier. Under general discussion, the winter damage to Pat's Knob was discussed. Repairs are needed to the fence and ice shield. The issue is who pays for damage to a site that has not yet been issued a letter awarding the site to the local jurisdiction.

Bill Fleiner will be sending out a meeting notice for the upcoming Finance Committee work session, which is expected to be the week of Aug. 18. The next formal Finance Committee meeting will be Monday, Sept. 8 at 9:00 am at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ), 828 Great Northern Blvd. in Helena.

IM Governance Committee Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana Governance Committee (IMGC) met in Helena on Mon., Aug. 4. and heard several sub-committee reports, including bylaws, legal, staffing, fleet mapping and the 2009 legislature. Action taken included approving a recommendation to sponsor a booth at the Sept. Montana Association of Counties (MACo) annual conference, moving forward on the revised Executive Director position description and hiring process and recommending approval of a contract with Communication and Management Services (CMS).

Bill Fleiner, IMGC Chair, updated the group on a positive resolution of issues associated with the Broken Pick site. In addition, he discussed the status of the IM Project becoming a sub-grantee of Homeland Security funds. Keith Lavender, Northrop Grumman, provided an update on FEMA Information Bulletin 271 and discussed a companion document he found that provides additional detail on compliance. Potential contractors have indicated ballpark pricing that is considerably lower than what had previously been estimated. Project Management is working on Statements of Work (SOW) for each site.

Bill and others recently met with staff members of Montana's Congressional Delegation. The IM Request for a federal appropriation will not be funded this year, but IM members are still encouraged to provide the delegation with letters of support and regular communication about the IM Project. A suggestion was made to produce a short video about the IM Project for use in outreach and education.

The next IMGC meeting is Mon., Sept. 8 at 12:30 pm in the Dept. of Corrections Annex Bldg., located behind 515 N. Sanders St. in Helena.

IM Project Directors Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) met in Helena on Aug. 5. IMPD Chair Alan Michaels reported that the IMPD Executive Committee signed off on a Certificate of Completion for the 7.4 Upgrade of the Master Control Site by Motorola. Sheriff John Walsh gave the report on the Aug. 4 IM Finance Committee meeting, and Irene Bushnell, Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ) Account Executive, provided a summary of finances.

Several items were addressed under the IM Governance Committee report, including approval of a revised Executive Director position description and an outline of the selection process. An amended contract with CMS was approved. The board also heard a report



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 31 • August 8, 2008



from Bob Murdo, legal counsel, on lease activities, contract work, and relationship building.

Other action taken by the board included asking the State Administrative Agency (SAA) to request an extension for the Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS) FY05 grant funding, supporting participation at the Sept. MACo annual conference, approving the HAFRC tower study and approving funding for cable trays at the Divide site.

The board discussed the ramifications of FEMA Information Bulletin (IB) 271 and listened to proposed processes for performing NEPAs. Contractors who perform environmental assessment work are being identified so as to comply with IB 271. Bob McWilliams, IM Technical Committee Chair, reported on the July 25 IMTC meeting, which approved Motorola's 12-site System Design Criteria, several Decision/Information Requests (DIRs), and an amended version of a Site Development Process Document.

Dennis Espeland, Northrop Grumman, presented a bi-monthly report, and emphasized that good progress is still being made and work plan tasks are stable. Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, gave an overview of the bi-weekly status report, and reported that microwave installation is behind schedule. In addition, significant winter damage occurred at the Pat's Knob site, and members discussed options for how repairs can be paid for. Dale Osborne, Montana Highway Patrol, reminded members to take precautions to keep communications sites free of tall grass and combustible materials because of the fire season.

The next IMPD meeting is Tuesday, Sept. 9 at 9:00 at the State Capitol in Helena.

Northern Tier Consortium Meeting

By Pete Mohan pmohan@mt.gov

The Northern Tier Interoperability Consortium (NTIC) board of directors and technical representatives met at the Great Northern Conference Center in Havre on Thurs., August 7. Vice Chair Curtis Petrick, opened the meeting and approval of minutes from the July teleconference were deferred to the next meeting. Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, provided an update to the group on the projects and activities taking place along the Northern Tier.

Participants discussed progress on sites and improved radio coverage. A large percentage of the sites within the Northern Tier are finalizing construction processes and will be capable of going live soon. Remaining sites are being cold installed awaiting final work. Frequency approvals, fleet mapping, and best business practices are still progressing within the consortium.

The next Northern Tier meeting will be a teleconference scheduled for 9:00 am on Thurs., Sept. 11.

South Central Consortium Meeting

By Pete Mohan pmohan@mt.gov

The South Central Montana Interoperability Communications Consortium (SCMIC) meeting was conducted at the Big Timber Library on August 6. Peggy Glass, SCMIC Chairperson, opened the meeting, introduced participants, and requested a motion for meeting minutes approval. Madison, Gallatin, Park, and Sweet Grass progress reports were discussed.

Peggy briefed the group on the Interoperability Montana (IM) Project Directors, the IM Technical Committee, and IM Governance Committee meetings and the impact of decisions on the consortium. Kerry O'Connell, SCMIC Project Director, and members discussed areas of interest, such as dealing with environmental assessment requirements, frequencies, additional consortium sites, and the need to delegate action items to specific personnel for completion. Tom Smith, Northrop Grumman, also reported on the current status of SCMIC sites.

The next meeting will be Sept. 17, beginning at 10:00, in Ennis, at a site to be determined.

Upcoming Meetings

August 13

Central Montana Consortium (CMICC)
Lewistown • 10:00 am
City Complex, 305 W. Watson

August 14

Montana APCO Quarterly Meeting
Lewistown • 9:00 am – Committee Meetings
2:00 pm - Chapter Meeting
Police Dept., 305 W. Watson

August 20

Eastern Tier Consortium (ETIC)
Glendive • 10:00 am
Law Enforcement Center; 440 Colorado Blvd.

August 21

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium
Butte • 10:00 am
Chamber of Commerce; 1000 George St.

August 25

Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Consortium
Bozeman • 10:00 am
City Center Motel, 507 W Main St.

August 25

IM Technical Committee (IMTC) Meeting
Helena • 9:00 am • State Capitol • Room 172

August 26

Big Sky 11 Consortium
Roundup • 10:00 am
Location to be Announced

August 27

Tri-County Consortium
Helena • 10:00 am
DOC Annex Conf. Rm.; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.